

BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

BRIAN HERMANSON,

Appellant,

V.

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL
ADMINISTRATION,

Respondent.

Case No. ALLO-02-0007

ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. Pursuant to RCW 41.64.060 and WAC 358-01-040, this appeal came on for hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, on Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination dated April 19, 2002. The hearing was held at the office of the Personnel Appeals Board in Olympia, Washington, on November 5, 2002. René Ewing, Member, reviewed the record and participated in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Appellant Brian Hermanson was present and was represented by Joanne McCaughan, Area Representative for the Washington Federation of State Employees. Clarice Nnanabu, Human Resource Consultant, represented Respondent Department of General Administration (GA).

Background. Appellant submitted a classification questionnaire (CQ) signed June 18, 2001, requesting that his position as a Warehouse Worker (WW) 1 be reallocated to a WW 2. Appellant's supervisor, Charles E. Hill, Warehouse Operations Supervisor, disagreed with the CQ. Mr. Hill did not sign the CQ and instead he attached a rebuttal to Appellant's statements, specifically disagreeing to the percentage of time Appellant spent performing his work.

1 Clarice Nnanabu, Human Resource Consultant, conducted a desk audit of Appellant's position, and
2 on December 12, 2001, informed Appellant that his position was properly allocated to the WW 1
3 classification. On December 21, 2001, Appellant appealed that decision to the Director of the
4 Department of Personnel. On March 13, 2001, Paul Peterson, Hearing Officer, conducted a review
5 of the allocation of Appellant's position. During the review, Mr. Peterson questioned a statement in
6 Ms. Nnanabu's December 12 memorandum in which she states, "There is no current CQ signed by
7 either the incumbent or his supervisor." Ms. Nnanabu clarified that she reviewed both the CQ
8 signed by Appellant on June 18, 2001 and the rebuttal prepared by Mr. Hill. She further stated that
9 there was no CQ in the file signed by both Appellant and his supervisor which reflected agreement
10 as to Appellant's duties. Ms. Nnanabu put her clarifying statement in writing and subsequently
11 submitted it to Mr. Peterson.

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13 By letter dated April 19, 2002, Mr. Peterson informed Appellant that his position was properly
14 allocated to the WW 1 classification. On May 20, 2002, Appellant filed exceptions to the
15 Director's determination. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of these proceedings.

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17 **Summary of Appellant's Argument.** Appellant takes exception to the allocation review that
18 found he performed all the duties outlined in the CQ, but that he did not perform them a significant
19 amount of the time to warrant reallocation to the WW 2 level. Appellant takes exception to the
20 determination that his operation of the WPX machine (Western Parcel Computer) primarily
21 involves data entry, and he asserts that he considers numerous factors in order to determine the most
22 efficient method of shipping an order. Appellant asserts that he constantly performs checking,
23 receiving and reentering duties and argues, therefore, that he meets the definition of a WW 2.
24 Appellant also takes exceptions to the hearing officer's requesting and accepting post-hearing
25 information from Ms. Nnanabu. Finally, Appellant argues that the evidence supports he performs

1 higher level duties a significant amount of time. Appellant contends that his duties are found in the
2 WW 2 class specification and that his position should be reallocated.

3 **Summary of Respondent's Argument.** Respondent argues that Appellant does not perform
4 checking and reentering of merchandise or use the Western Parcel Express computer a majority of
5 his time. Respondent asserts that only 10 percent of Appellant's time is spent performing these
6 duties. Respondent disagrees that use of the Western Parcel Express computer is a "specialized
7 warehousing function" and asserts that Appellant's use of the computer consists primarily of
8 inputting addresses for shipping labels. Finally, Respondent asserts that the clarifying response to
9 Mr. Peterson was appropriate. Respondent argues that Appellant's duties are consistent with a WW
10 1.

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12 **Primary Issue.** Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position should be allocated
13 to the Warehouse Worker 1 classification should be affirmed.

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15 **Relevant Classifications.** Warehouse Worker 1, class code 77700, and Warehouse Worker 2, class
16 code 77720.

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18 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
19 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
20 measurement of the volume of work performed nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
21 work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in
22 similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular
23 position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the
24 class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v.
25 Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

1 The definition of the Warehouse Worker 1 states that the incumbent “performs manual labor and
2 routine clerical work in receiving, ordering, storing, rewarehousing, issuing/shipping, delivering or
3 picking supplies, equipment, furnishings or provisions in a commissary or warehouse. The
4 applicable distinguishing characteristic here states in part that these positions are located in separate
5 buildings devoted to receiving, storing and shipping supplies, equipment, furnishings or provisions.
6 Typical duties include unloading, opening and checking incoming and outgoing stock; preparing
7 stock identification tags; filing purchase orders; transporting supplies/equipment using a forklift or
8 other mechanical stock handling equipment; issuing supplies from storages locations, preparing
9 requisition; and assembling, packaging and delivering or arranging for delivery of times.

10
11 The definition of the Warehouse Worker 2, in part, indicates that in addition to duties assigned to
12 Warehouse Worker 1 position, the incumbent manages or assists in the management of a
13 warehouse; or performs specialized warehousing functions in a large volume, fast turnover
14 warehouse. There is no dispute that Appellant works in a large volume, fast turnover warehouse.
15 The issue here is whether Appellant performs “specialized warehousing functions” that include
16 checking, reworking, dispatching or full-time forklift operations. Some of the typical duties
17 include:

18
19 Supervises or participates in the procuring, receiving, unloading, moving and
loading of various types of materials ... and equipment;

20 Conducts ongoing property inventory control maintenance . . . ;

21 Supervises or participates in unpacking items and checking ... against shipping
22 documents . . . ;

23 Prepares items for shipment and makes up necessary shipping papers, tags or
24 labels; maintains records of such transactions;

25 Orders items . . . ;

26 Conducts physical inventories . . . ;

1 Transports or plans for transport of supplies . . .;

2 Operates light truck, forklift or other mechanical stocking handling equipment . . ,

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5 The CQ prepared by Appellant includes 15 items which describe his duties. Appellant “lumped”
6 these varied tasks under the same percentage of time: 90 percent. Appellant’s supervisor did not
7 dispute that Appellant performed the duties described. However, he disagreed as to the amount of
8 time Appellant performed each of the individual and distinct tasks, and he provided an addendum
9 with a break down of the percentage of time Appellant spent on each duty. In general, Appellant’s
10 duties are as follows:

- 11
- 12 • Use remote computer terminal to enter or retrieve data;
 - 13 • Use WPX electronic equipment to enter data and create shipping labels;
 - 14 • Pick stock items for orders using a motorized handling equipment;
 - 15 • Determine and select the most efficient method of transportation using predetermined
 - 16 guidelines;
 - 17 • Pack and prepared items for shipment;
 - 18 • Fill out shipping documents; prepare packing list;
 - 19 • Unload, move and load freight materials (using forklift and pallet jacks); provide customer
 - 20 service assistance;
 - 21 • Prepare UPS/WPX call tags, enter into freight computer and accept returns;
 - 22 • Restock with forklift;
 - 23 • Inventories commodities;
 - 24 • Maintains clean work area.
- 25
- 26

20 The credible evidence support that while some duties Appellant performs may fit under the typical
21 duties and specialized functions of the WW 2 class, they do not, however, occupy a majority of his
22 time. There is no evidence to support that Appellant spends a majority of this time (51 percent)
23 working in any functional area of the WW 2 class. For instance, the amount of time that Appellant
24 spends performing re Coopering activities (entering call tags into freight computer; accepting
25 returns; and taking return back to receiving), is not a significant percentage of his time and
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1 constitutes well under 51 percent of his time. Appellant's major duties and responsibilities include
2 receiving, ordering, storing, rewarehousing, issuing/shipping, delivering and picking
3 supplies/equipment. These duties clearly fall within the definition of the WW 1 and are described
4 by the typical work for this class. Finally, we do not conclude that the Department of Personnel
5 erred when it requested and received clarification of Ms. Nnanabu's December 12, 2001
6 memorandum. Mr. Peterson's request did not produce new evidence and was merely a clarification
7 of a vague statement in Ms. Nnanabu's memo.

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9 **Conclusion.** Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be denied and the determination of the
10 Director, dated April 19, 2002, should be affirmed and adopted.

11 **ORDER**

12 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellant is
13 denied and the Director's determination dated April 19, 2002, is affirmed and adopted. A copy is
14 attached.

15 DATED this _____ day of _____, 2002.

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17 WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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Walter T. Hubbard, Chair

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René Ewing, Member